GEAR & GADGETS / PRODUCT NEWS & REVIEWS

# YouTube shuts down public RSS feeds of user subscriptions

Easily getting your YouTube videos into an RSS reader is no longer supported.

by **Ron Amadeo** - May 12, 2014 6:11 pm UTC

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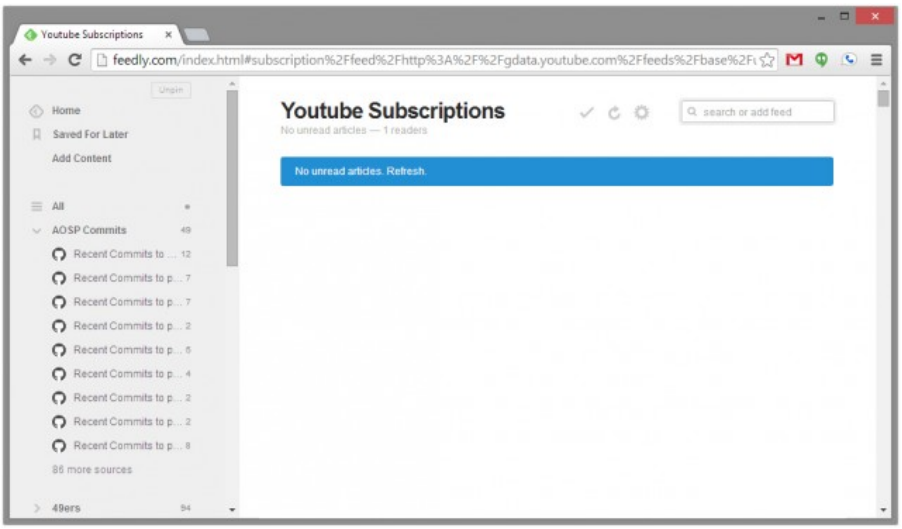


If you're a news junky, you probably use an RSS reader like Feed.ly to keep up with stuff on the Web. One of the nicest ways to consume YouTube subscriptions was to use an RSS feed of new videos, allowing them to show up just like news articles do. You might not have noticed yet, but Google quietly shut down this feature a few days ago.

The RSS feed, which used to be http://gdata.youtube.com/feeds/base/users/[username]/newsubscriptionvideos, now throws out a "403 Forbidden" error. Previously, the URL would provide a publicly accessible feed of new subscriptions from any YouTube account, provided users didn't choose to turn off public subscription retrieval.

The feed was part of the YouTube Data API v2, which was deprecated in March of this year. The replacement—predictably named YouTube Data API v3—doesn't offer a comparable data stream. Bug reports filed for this regression as early as January 2013 have gone unanswered, save for a single response in January 2014 (yes, a year later) saying, "Patch is in the works, however we can't comment on the expected date." Now it's five months later, the feature is gone, and there's no solution in sight.

With a combined 210 stars and 96 comments across two bug reports (one, two), this is already of the most popular bugs on the gdata-issues bug tracker.

As far as workarounds go, it looks like YouTube Data API v3 will offer an *authenticated* subscription feed, meaning you can dodge the 403 forbidden error via an OAuth token that expires every hour. Apps that refresh this once an hour for you have already been written, but that involves turning certain YouTube data over to a third party and dealing with a potentially unstable service.

If you're using Feed.ly like we suspect many people are, you won't get an error message. YouTube wasn't quiet over the weekend—your new videos just silently stopped showing up.

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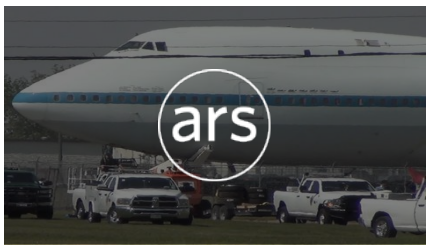


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> tycho55 wrote:
> Interesting. If I try http://gdata.youtube.com/feeds/base/users/[username]/newsubscriptionvideos I get "Forbidden", but if I try http://gdata.youtube.com/feeds/base/users/[username]/uploads, it still works.

These are channel uploads, not user subscriptions. You could recreate your subscription feed by collecting the individual feeds for each channel, but for many people (me included) this would involve over 100 RSS feeds.

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**Ron Amadeo** / Ron is the Reviews Editor at Ars Technica, where he specializes in Android OS and Google products. He is always on the hunt for a new gadget and loves to rip things apart to see how they work.
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